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# THE RED CROSS

IN CHARGE OF

JANE A. DELANO, R.N.

*Chairman of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service*

## EUROPEAN SERVICE

The nurses selected for service in Europe reported promptly at Red Cross Headquarters in New York according to a schedule prepared long before the chairman of the National Committee left Washington.

It speaks volumes for the business-like methods of our Local Committees and the sense of responsibility of the individual nurse that one hundred and thirty-eight Red Cross nurses could be so easily mobilized from many different points and completely equipped for foreign service without confusion or delay.

After a conference with Major Robert U. Paterson, director of the Red Cross personnel, and Helen Scott Hay, superintendent, it was decided that classes in First Aid should be held during the voyage, this instruction to be given by the directors of the various units, and that Major Paterson should lecture to the entire group of nurses and physicians on the organization and equipment of military hospitals, transport columns, relief stations and nursing service in time of war.

While all nurses sailing on the Red Cross ship were native-born citizens of the United States, many had names which were distinctly European and in planning for the assignment of the groups to the various countries difficulties were at once encountered. If any attempt were to be made to place the nurses where their names would not prove an embarrassment it meant separating them from their friends. They were finally asked if they would not be willing to follow the European custom and be known only by their Christian names with the title of "Sister." It was rather amusing to see the look of astonishment on one hundred and thirty-eight faces, when this suggestion was made, but after a moment's consideration it was accepted with enthusiasm and even before the ship sailed, notes were received signed "Sister Helen," "Sister Donna," "Sister Margaret," and other names equally attractive.

The groups were assigned to the various countries before leaving New York subject of course to revision later should occasion demand.

Unit A—Philadelphia Nurses, Margaret Lehmann, supervisor, France.

Unit B—Baltimore Nurses, Alice E. Henderson, supervisor, France.

Unit C—Manhattan Nurses, Lucy Minnegerode, supervisor, Russia.

Unit D—Rochester and Connecticut Nurses, J. Beatrice Bowman, supervisor, England.

Unit E—Cleveland Nurses, Alice C. Beatle, supervisor, Austria.

Unit F—Boston Nurses, Donna G. Bugar, supervisor, England.

Unit G—Brooklyn and New Jersey Nurses, Frances H. Meyer, supervisor, Germany.

Unit H—Chicago Nurses, Charlotte Burgess, supervisor, Russia.

Unit I—Manhattan (2) and Washington, D. C., Nurses, Anna L. Reutinger, supervisor, Germany.

Unit K—Cincinnati Nurses, Elizabeth Dooley, supervisor, Austria.

We were extremely fortunate not only in the group of women secured to act as supervisors but in having most competent nurses in each of the units well fitted to take executive positions should it be desirable to form smaller groups.

#### SERVIAN GROUP

Passage for the Servian nurses was secured on the Greek steamship *Ioannina* sailing from New York on September 8, with Mary E. Gladwin in charge of the twelve nurses.

#### FIRST LETTERS FROM RED CROSS NURSES

##### *Unit A*

S.S. RED CROSS,  
September 23, 1914.

*To the American Journal of Nursing,*

*The Public Health Nurse Quarterly:*

Greetings from the S.S. *Red Cross* and Unit A, the Philadelphia group. Long before this you have heard all about the preliminary preparation for this expedition, and I thought you might like to know just how the American Red Cross Nurses have spent their time during the sea voyage.

The days have been truly busy ones, more like the training school, patients included, for sea-sickness was very much in evidence the first few days. The daily schedule has been as follows:

8.00 a.m. Breakfast

9.30–11.30 Lectures by doctors

11.30 a.m. Many nurses made use of gymnasium

1 p.m. Luncheon

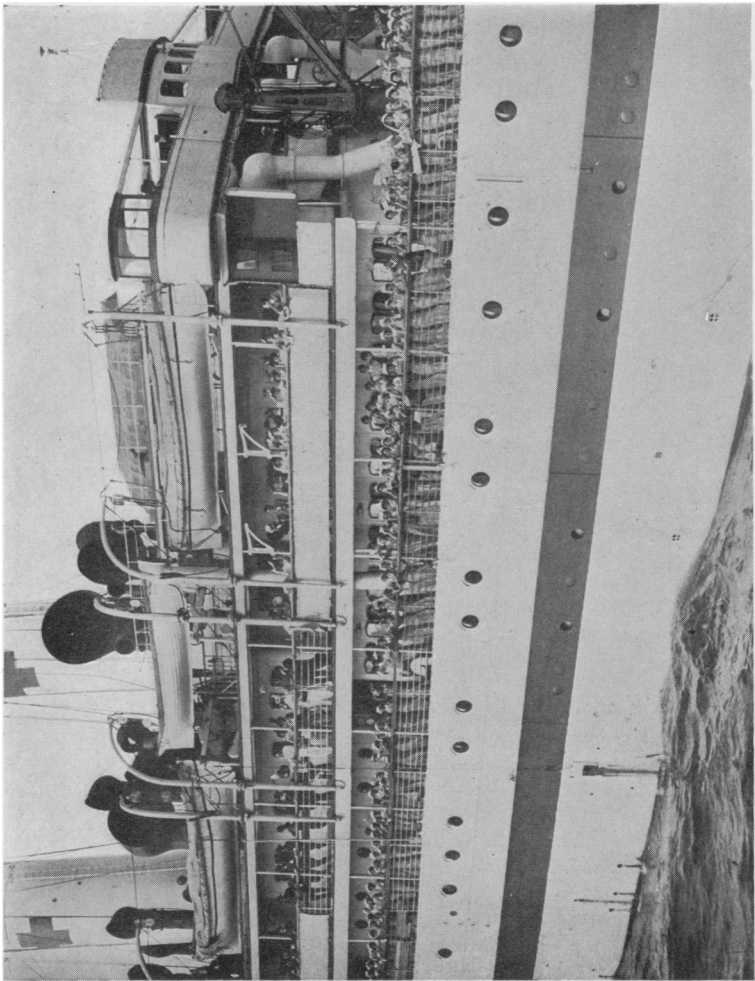
2–3 p.m. Quiz and practical nursing

4 p.m. French or German



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LEAVING FOR THE WAR ZONE



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ABOARD THE RED CROSS STEAMER

7 p.m. Dinner

8.30 p.m. Prayers conducted by Sister Helen (Scott Hay).

10 p.m. Quiet.

The lectures have been given by the doctors on such subjects as first aid, contagious and infectious diseases, anatomy, anaesthesia, surgical work, metric system, etc. The afternoon classes have been conducted by their assistants and consisted in the nursing care of the patients. At odd times between lectures and classes could be seen groups of nurses practicing bandaging or holding general discussions on some nursing subject.

Sister Helen, by the way we are all known as sisters, has given splendid talks on our future work, our attitude towards those with whom we may come in contact, on discipline, and has given to the supervisors many valuable suggestions. Besides the regular lectures and classes Major Patterson gave two very instructive lectures, one on military hospital camp and the other on some contagious diseases, viz.: dysentery, cholera, smallpox, bubonic plague.

Mr. Mohun, one of the officers on board, gave an intensely interesting and instructive lantern slide lecture on his expedition sixteen years ago through Africa, and another lecture describing his expedition through the same country twenty years ago.

The entire time during the trip has been one of preparation for our future work, and it has been amazing how fast the time has passed when there was nothing to look at but sea and sky.

We all feel keenly the trust and confidence placed in us by the American Red Cross Society, representing as we do the United States as a whole, the various cities and training schools as individuals and it is the earnest prayer of every one that in every way possible, in whatever country we land, we may prove ourselves a credit to our country and our colors, by rendering the valuable assistance expected of us to those in great need.

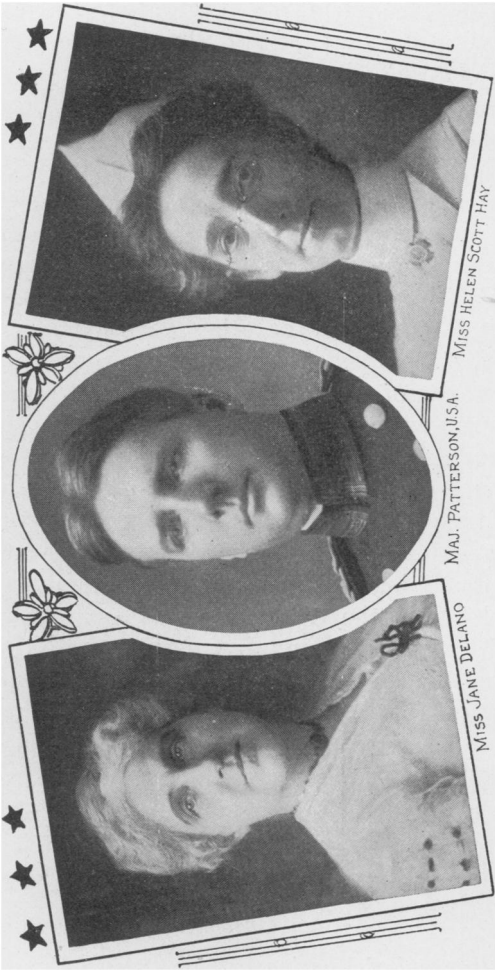
Very cordially yours,  
SISTER MARGARET (LEHMANN).

### *Unit B*

#### *The American Journal of Nursing:*

Those chosen to form the Baltimore contingent, Unit B, for European service under the Red Cross will be assigned to duty in France.

After many of the preliminary details had been completed it was thought advisable to transfer some of the nurses from one group to another so that as large a number as possible in each unit would speak the language of the country to which they were assigned. For this



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reason Margaret McGary was transferred to the unit assigned to Russia and in exchange Eva Doniat, St. Joseph's Hospital, Chicago, joined the Baltimore Unit.

The surgeons in charge of Unit B are Dr. Rhoades Fayreweather, director; Dr. Harry Slack and Dr. Lewis Spencer of the Johns Hopkins Medical School, assistants.

We leave the Red Cross ship at Brest, where further information will be obtained as to where the unit will be finally stationed.

The members of the Baltimore contingent are unanimous in desiring to express their appreciation to the officers of the Red Cross for the attention to the smallest details with regard to the protection and comfort of their nurses. The spirit shown has been a great inspiration, and has done much to strengthen the desire for active service under any condition.

Alice E. Henderson.

### *Unit C*

#### *To the American Journal of Nursing:*

With the opening of the European War arose the question of whether the American Red Cross should send nurses to the front. There were many vague rumors, but on August 2, the actual notices were sent out and the nurses asked to report at their local headquarters. Every nurse was asked if she were free from domestic ties, and able to accept active service. Those that had not been inoculated against typhoid and smallpox were told to have their physical examination made right away, and to start their anti-typhoid inoculations. Any not having time to complete the treatment would be finished on shipboard.

On September 2, the nurses reported at the New York Headquarters at 130 East 22d Street, for their outfit, each nurse getting a cape, hat, uniforms, work, laundry and shoe bags, duffle bag and sweater. The steamer rugs were given out on the boat. The uniform is a practicable, workable one, consisting of grey chambray dress in one piece with a soft, low, white collar and an apron cut in one piece with a bib, something on the style of a butcher's apron. The caps are of white muslin, easily laundered and made up. The entire uniform when not in use folds up into a small tight flat bundle, easily handled and packed.

On Friday, September 4, all the nurses met in the auditorium of the Young Women's Christian Association and were addressed by Major Patterson, Mrs. Draper, Miss Boardman, Miss Delano and Miss Hay. The first idea of what the trip meant and what would be encountered was realized clearly. After Miss Delano's intimate talk to the nurses, there was not a dry eye in the room, but no one had an idea of withdrawing.

On September 5, the nurses reported in uniform on the ship to familiarize themselves with the boat and to have their pictures taken for the Red Cross report.

On Monday, September 7, the nurses reported on the boat at 9 a.m. in uniform with their baggage. The ship was open to the friends of the nurses and doctors and at 4 p.m. the signal for "All ashore who are going ashore" was given. Just before pulling out from the dock Miss Duffield of the Sari Opera Company sang the Star Spangled Banner, and the ship steamed out amid the cheers of everybody and the shrill whistles of all the craft around. The boat steamed up the Hudson to a point off 96th Street, where it anchored, as we supposed, for the night, expecting to sail Tuesday at noon. At the last minute some necessary changes had to be made in the crew, and the clearance papers were refused until the ship had an entire American crew.

For the six days while anchored in the river we had three and four hours shore leave every day, and many of our friends came on board to see us. Every boat that passed the Red Cross ship while it was off 96th Street saluted as she passed, sometimes with three blasts of the whistle, at other times with the flag dipped, and the excursion boat *Highlander* played the Star Spangled Banner every morning as she passed. A party of "Little Mothers" sailed around us one day and cheered us all. One dark-haired, dark-eyed little Jewish girl called out bravely: "Good-bye, nurses, some day I will be a nurse and go to the wars." We hope that she may be a nurse for we need her spirit, but we hope, too, a like necessity will never come to her.

By September 12, we had our entire American crew and at 4 p.m. weighed anchor and steamed down the river, saluted by all the river boats and even railroad trains along the shore. When in the upper bay we passed several ocean liners, coming in crowded to the rail with returning passengers, and by the sound that greeted us every single person on board must have cheered our ship and mission. We anchored off Quarantine for the night and at 4 p.m. Sunday, September 13, we weighed anchor and steamed out to sea, dropping our pilot just at the end of Ambrose Channel, pointed the ship to the east and sailed on.

The nurses were at first grouped in units of twelve as they came from their home cities. Later on necessary changes were made according to ability, special training and languages, and were grouped according to their destinations. There were daily classes in the morning on first aid, and lectures pertaining to our work from the doctors. In the afternoon we had two hours in languages. Every day the members of a unit met for a general talk among themselves to discuss the work done and the problems to be met. After supper we had prayers and

then were free until ten o'clock, when the nurses retired to their state-rooms. The ship is an especially steady one and very comfortable. Except for a little rain and fog at the end of the trip, the days were ideal, a bright sun and only a gentle roll to the sea.

MARY FREDERIKA FARLEY.

*Unit E*

*American Journal of Nursing:*

The Cleveland group of twelve nurses, known as Unit E, destination Austria, wish to send greetings and best wishes to the JOURNAL. We wish it were possible for you to follow us more closely in our work there, but hope to send you some word from time to time.

Sincerely,

ALICE C. BEATLE.

*Unit H*

*American Journal of Nursing,  
Rochester, N. Y.*

The Chicago group of Red Cross Nurses chosen for European service sends their greetings to the JOURNAL and through its columns to their friends who are its readers. They are to be sent to Russia, Sister Charlotte (Burgess) supervising.

The time on shipboard has been a busy period of preparation full of work and study. During the entire voyage many hours of each day have been devoted to classes, lectures and conferences, all of which have given us not only a wider knowledge and brought us into closer touch with the service we are about to undertake, but it has also given us courage and inspiration.

We are leaving our ship at Falmouth, England, where instructions will be given us for the remainder of our journey.

CHARLOTTE BURGESS.

*Unit K*

*To the American Journal of Nursing,  
Rochester, N. Y.*

The Cincinnati group of nurses, classified as Unit K, en route to Austria for Red Cross service, wish to say: "Good wishes to the JOURNAL, and how we'll miss it!"

LYDA W. ANDERSON.

A cablegram was received from Miss Hay on September 24, announcing the safe arrival of the Red Cross ship at Falmouth, England.

On October 1, a welcome message came from Miss Gladwin, sent from Palermo, stating that all were well.